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Thank you, Senator Slossberg, Senator Boucher, Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Association of School Nurses of Connecticut (ASNC) regarding:

**HB 5446**  
***AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES.***

**SUPPORT** The Association of School Nurses of Connecticut (ASNC) and Connecticut Nurses' Association support Section 1 of the proposed statute related to 12 hours of professional development for school nurses during the first year of employment. The recommendations are made by the School Nurse Advisory Council (SNAC), a legislatively appointed Council during its 4<sup>th</sup> year of existence. As Co-Chair of SNAC, I can validate the careful thought put into the recommendation by all members of the Council.

Nurses entering the profession of school nursing do not have preservice education and may not have any experience related to school health and their role in an educational environment. This professional development will provide new school nurses with knowledge of school health services, educational requirements in Special Education, 504 and various aspects of practicing in an educational environment.

Thank you for your support of this much needed professional development. The process will serve to enhance the ability of nurses to function in school as well as protect the children they serve and the districts they work in.

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2018*) On and after July 1, 2018, any school nurse who is initially qualified as a school nurse pursuant to sections 10-212-1 to 10-212-7, inclusive, of the regulations of Connecticut state agencies, shall complete twelve hours of professional development during the first year such school nurse is employed by a local or regional board of education. Such professional development shall use curriculum approved by the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Association of School Nurses and the Connecticut Nurses' Association.

**OPPOSE** The Association of School Nurses of Connecticut oppose Section 4 of the HB 5446 which requires a dental screening performed by a dentist as part of the mandated physical examination prior to entry to school. As noted in testimony previously submitted in opposition to HB 5213 **AN ACT CONCERNING ORAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS OF CHILDREN**, ASNC notes the requirement for a dental screening in HB 5446 is more restrictive than HB 5213 eliminating the allowance for screening performed a dental hygienist. The main objection in this bill is that the requirement for a dental examination creates an unintended barrier for children to enter school. Dental

care, although necessary for children, is not easily available to some families. There is no current mechanism for children to obtain a dental examination for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, lack of dental insurance, lack of dentists who accept HUSKY, and undocumented children. Until a plan for children to obtain dental care similar to the existing plan for children to obtain a physical examination through a School Medical Advisor, clinics or Urgent Care Facilities, the dental requirement in HB 5446 prevents children from entering school.

Sec. 4. Subsection (b) of section 10-206 of the 2018 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2018*):

(b) Each local or regional board of education shall require each child to have a health assessment prior to public school enrollment. The assessment shall include: (1) A physical examination which shall include hematocrit or hemoglobin tests, height, weight, blood pressure, and, beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, a chronic disease assessment which shall include, but not be limited to, asthma as defined by the Commissioner of Public Health pursuant to subsection (c) of section 19a-62a. The assessment form shall include (A) a check box for the provider conducting the assessment, as provided in subsection (a) of this section, to indicate an asthma diagnosis, (B) screening questions relating to appropriate public health concerns to be answered by the parent or guardian, and (C) screening questions to be answered by such provider; (2) an updating of immunizations as required under section 10-204a, provided a registered nurse may only update said immunizations pursuant to a written order by a physician or physician assistant, licensed pursuant to chapter 370, or an advanced practice registered nurse, licensed pursuant to chapter 378; (3) vision, hearing [\[ \] and speech screenings](#) and gross dental screenings [performed by a dentist licensed to practice dental medicine in this or another state](#); and (4) such other information, including health and developmental history, as the physician feels is necessary and appropriate. The assessment shall also include tests for tuberculosis, sickle cell anemia or Cooley's anemia and tests for lead levels in the blood where the local or regional board of education determines after consultation with the school medical advisor and the local health department, or in the case of a regional board of education, each local health department, that such tests are necessary, provided a registered nurse may only perform said tests pursuant to the written order of a physician or physician assistant, licensed pursuant to chapter 370, or an advanced practice registered nurse, licensed pursuant to chapter 378.

Children need not be prevented entry to school due to a law that creates unintended consequences because of a requirement for dental screening. We urge you to delay action on this bill, as well as any related legislation, until a mechanism for dental care, accessible to all families, is developed.

Respectfully submitted:

***Donna Kosiorowski MS RN NCSN***